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SUBMISSION OF FINAL Ph.D SYNOPSIS ON THE TOPIC

ENERGY PR AND ROLE OF MEDIA: A STUDY IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE

UNDER THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

IN THE SUBJECT OF
MASS COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM

SUBMITTED BY
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(MAHARASHTRA)

2012-13

Final Ph.D. synopsis:

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I. Introduction:

The concept of sustainable development encompasses the problematique of degradation of natural resources as well as it includes different angle such as rational use of water, energy, and other natural sources. This is a scientific concept and also interdisciplinary field of study. (Nayak Kunja Bihari "Sustainable Development", Serials Publication, New Delhi, 2008, p.4)

The role, relevance and effectivity of energy PR have become more relevant in twenty-first century. Public relation is a fine art of communication which has been developed largely after World War-Il. It has been observed that "The rapid expansion of trade and industry, the emergence of large corporations, controlling financial and physical assets unheard of before, gave the new businessmen a feeling that they were on top of the world." All these corporate industries today mostly relied on public relations for building their images in a systematic manner. It has been observed that the information society today largely depend on the special status of scientific knowledge, social environment with many messages and channels as well as widely defused information technology. Energy public relations are also using all these advanced technologies for involving, persuading and transforming people. Mass education to save energy can be attained by bridging communication gap through systematic public relations.

In energy PR there are some communication gaps. The common point in all these gaps is that available knowledge is not drawn upon systematically; Energy PR can help a great deal to bridge

all these gaps at various levels. Public relations in general and energy in particular are based on creating support for movement. Edward L. Bebrnays had opined that "Public relations are the attempt. by information persuasion and adjustment to engineer public support for an activity, cause, movement or institution." Energy PR also has to engineer support from people for energy saving campaigns to improve its acceptance. About interdisciplinary nature of public relations, it has been noted that "Public Relations is a combination of philosophy, sociology, economics, language, psychology, journalism, communication and other knowledge into a system of human understanding." Such comprehensive discipline is very much benefitting to solve problems like energy and communication.

The revolution in communication has created a whole new pattern of human dynamics. The current changes in society are basically because of shifts in public attitudes. In this connection relevance of public relations is becoming more significant worldwide and energy is one of such sectors where public relation is very much useful. The role, relevance and utility of energy PR are significant because we cannot succeed in persuading people unless we communicate clearly and accurately. Make the image you seek to convey clear cut. Place the image in the environment, not in some remote getting. Energy PR has to play a vital role in such environmental setting for saving energy units. It has been observed that "The public relations activity is becoming increasingly necessary for the procurement of economically essential production factors." Energy PR is significant because it is related to production process. Energy PR is based on real communication. Real communication is profound understanding, not merely of the words being said, but of the experience and the meaning behind the words. Energy messages have to testify these facts because such messages require a comprehensive understanding.

In any process conducting dialogue is very important in crucial issues like energy public relations. The PRO bridges communication gap. The energy organizations and customers must be brought together for such smooth dialogue. In this research work efforts were made to develop such a dialogue through proper use of mass media. Energy PR is thus a catalyst in sustainable development communication.

Successful media relations involve understanding the media, how they work and what their requirements are. It also involves relating this knowledge

to the needs of your own organization and the objectives of its media relations program. It is important to work out the best strategy and to plan accordingly. Energy PR is not exception to this phenomenon. Now after completing of this research work, final findings have been presented.

II. Significance and necessity of study

There is increasing demand of energy. However, the sources of energy are limited. The energy projects are not up coming in a satisfactory manner. Due to this adverse situation, energy sources are scare and they require to be safely used. Here lies the importance of energy literacy and public relations. Whenever there is uncertainty there is need of effective communication. Non availability of energy has become a serious problem and it is affecting development processes negatively. Energy sources are limited, either they are overused or they are under used. This complex situation is creating serious problems, which requires energy literacy to be enhanced. Due to scarcity of energy sources mass education is highly required for creating awareness through mass media .Both print and electronic media can play a vital role in this regard.

In these circumstances PRO has to persuade, engineer consent to convey information that may not be wanted or welcome. His task is made easier by the developed techniques of analysis and communication, which now exist, and by the specialized advice and help which is available to him. On this background the significance of the present research work can be illustrated on the basis of following points:

- Due to acute shortage of energy there is a need of coordination between traditional and nontraditional sources of energy. PRs can play a key role in this connection because if people are properly educated they can save energy and can avoid crisis in the difficult situation. In the recent Global Energy Conference held at Abu Dhabi, UN has called for developing radical action program for the implementation of new energy saving strategy for all. It has been decided to provide fair and pollution free energy in 2030 AD

- There is a need of planning, control and coordination of

available energy sources, such as electricity. In the recent global conference organized by UNO it has been proclaimed that Electricity not only provides light but it also accelerates production process on large scale. Hence its saving remains the vital phenomenon and requires sensitization through public relations media.

- The leakage of electricity as well as illegal theft of electric services can be avoided • by sensitizing citizens through energy education. Energy literacy must be an important area of future mass education. In the field like energy PR Sengupta has observed that "Establishing good media relations and making the corporate management appreciate its importance will be only part of a broader public relations program." In energy PR both public and private sector players have to understand this need of mass education in a systematic manner.

- Optimum use of energy depends on strategic communication, planned through public relations. About strategic planning it has been observed that strategy means the direction and scope of an organization over the longer term, which ideally matches its resources to its changing environment, and in particular to its markets, customers and clients to meet stakeholders expectations." Such strategy is required to meet the challenges of energy public relations in 21st century.

- A proper coordination between print, electronic and folk media can help for the dissemination of energy PR messages. The effective use of media requires grafting of messages. The forms can be used and messages can be replanted to make them more easy and effective. The effective message designing can be possible by planting folk forms in the electronic media. The message is transmitted by spoken or written word, or by image, or a combination of these." Such grafting helps to improve the content of messages. The information must be aimed at the proper direction and musts make use of the proper media to reach the sector of the public for which it is intended." In energy sector the target audience is vast and wide spread and messages must be properly designed different layers of audience in an effective way. The receiver must have confidence in the sender, but the sender, upon whom the main onus of the communication process lies, must always keep in mind the fact that to get an idea across you must talk about something that interests the receiver." In tune with this the messages in energy Pr must be very effective, easy and communicable so that the message of energy saving is smoothly fostered.

The necessity of the present study looms large in the current scenario. In the developing country like India in general and Maharashtra in particular energy saving is acute need and by the proper use of energy, the state can take a leap forward in the fields like agriculture, industry, and human resource development. In order to resolve the crisis one way we have to create constant and continuous new energy sources and on the other hand we have to explore possibility of energy saving in a systematic manner. Creating consciousness about proper energy sources is the need of the time. In the UN declaration it has been focused that energy is required for overall development of earth and mankind. In the field of energy media can sensitize public mind for the use of solar energy, wind energy as well as bio gas projects. Such alternative energy sources can help to overcome increasing pressure on electricity in the day to day life. Major 118 countries in the world are developing common policy and common strategies to face energy crises and UN has called private players to invest with their full capacities to resolve the crisis. On this background the necessity of present study can be shapely focused below:

In the energy sector strategic public relations is a highly significant process. It has been observed that "The term media relations refer to the communication pattern between an organization and those sections of the media which are interested in its activities. Such communication may be concerned with anything and everything which happens within and around that organization. It may also be concerned with local and national issues, with finance and legislation and with public opinion." In the sector of energy all these three aspects finance, regulations, and molding public opinion are closely related.

Ill. **Objectives:**

Any scientific research requires clear cut objectives. Wilkinson and Bhandarkar have observed that "Need for a factual evaluation of a program, information pertinent to policy making or social planning need for finding out a practical solution to a certain problem facing community etc. may suggest certain topics as well worth selecting for research." The need of energy saving and its social significance is the important reason for this study. Further, it is true that "The originating questions represent the beginnings of certain difficulties or challenges which formulated in much specific terms would indicate where exactly the answer to them can be searched for."

On this background following objectives can be set forth:

- To study energy problems in Maharashtra in the view of energy PR perspective.
- To examine energy saving communication in the present forms and to bring radical changes in its formation and effect
- To suggest remedies for building energy literacy.
- To explain the role of mass media in promoting energy PR with special reference to mass education.
- To develop a new PR model for sustainable development to energy PR

Thus all these objectives will be examined and testified to the field of energy public relations. Energy PR is gaining significance both in private and public sector. It has been observed that "Indian Oil, Oil and Natural Gas Commission, Hindustan Petroleum, Coal India, Bharat Petroleum, BHEL, are some of the public sectors industries ranked biggest in Asia and the

World." The study of these agencies can be conducted in PR sense. However, energy saving campaigns and their public acceptance is now a larger issue of discussion. Hence in this work energy PR has been studied in sustainable development perspective. The mass media today are playing a key role creating awareness in the field of energy education.

The rise of public relations in the world can be traced from industrial revolution, which began in U.K. and later on spread in Europe, America and Asia. It has been noted that "Public relations is of recent origin, not only in India, but also in the west. PR relates itself to the social and economic environment." This socio economic environment depends on political economy of country. By 20th Century America became 1st class industrial power. It has been observed that "In America PR developed as an off shoot of the growing industrialization process noticeable in their large business corporations." However, it has been rightly observed that "There is no universally agreed history of public relations. Some people believe that throughout civilization there have been men and women who were skilled in the practices of public relations." We have to wield the case study based on history of PR. Further it has been observed that" The term Public Relations in its present connotation was first used in the Year Book of Railway Literature in 1897" PR went on developing in the early decade of 20th Century. According to Cutlip "PR began to develop in the year 1880s because this was the beginning of American industrialization. Next 25 years witnessed the advancement of PR due to the advancement in the field of communication. Also in 1896 Presidential candidates used PR as means to reach the masses." It has been further observed that "according to Cutlip the declaration of Independence is a PR document written out of respect for the opinions of mankind. The American civil war also helped the advancement of PR in the sense that the opposing parties were represented to the public through public relations." Ivy Lee the main expert who provided scientific base to PR. It has been rightly pointed that "In 1906 Ivyledbetter Lee arrived on the scene. A graduate of Princeton University he was offered a top level management post in the coal industry in USA. He ripped asides the cloak of secrecy and callousness which had surrounded big businesses in its relations with the public until then." It has been further observed that "He became the first to use press handout system in public relations." In 1900, the first PR consultancy known as Publicity Bureau was formed in Boston. In 1915 Ivy Lee made his declaration on truthful recording of facts on behalf of Pennsylvania Rail Road Company for handling the Rail road accidents. The success he achieved proved important in recognizing the force

underlying the PR movement. Further it is stated that "In the same year Lee helped Pennsylvania Rail Road Company in connection with a serious accident. In 1914 Lee became an advisor to Rockefeller Jr. Lee was the first man to use the term Publicity and advertising in public relations work. In his footsteps followed many other notable Americans."

Thus Ivy Lee became founder of modern public relations in the world.

After World War-I there was a tremendous change in the global vision of public relations. After World War-I was over PR became a new science of social cognition It has been observed that "The period from 1929 to 1941 was marked by tremendous economic, social and political changes in America and around the world. They were accompanied by propaganda, publicity, and PR on a scale never known before." About the transition of PR in World War-II, it has been observed that "As a result of depression (1929-33), PR activities were greatly enlarged. Business now realized the need to explain its contributions to the entire economic system." PR publications became popular during this phase. Both the World Wars were boons for the development of PR. About the impact of World War-I Ravindran has observed that "The outbreak of World War I (1914-18) witnessed many significant developments in the field of PR. It has been rightly observed that "For the first time in world history a new kind of war started i.e. a war in which the role of the people behind the battle lines, the people engaged in production, the people running the economy, was no less important than that of the combatants at the front."

It has been observed that "The problem of persuading people within the country, people in neutral countries and even those in enemy countries became central to the war effort."

It has been further observed that "Amongst those who served on the committee were people like Edward L. Bernays, and these men subsequently emerged as the first generation of the PR professionals in the U.S."

Thus PR on the world evolved during I and II World Wars and it brought new wind of change on the global level and India also was absorbed in these changes because this period was peak period for the freedom movement of India.

IV. Hypothesis:

Any research work requires specific hypothesis. Regarding search of hypothesis it has been observed that "Hypotheses may have been stated by previous research workers. The researcher has to take stock of those various hypotheses with a view to evaluating their usefulness for further research and to consider whether they suggest any new hypotheses."

About the need of the hypothesis, it has been pointed that "Research is a productive means by which the best products may be developed." In this work we have to develop a PR model for energy sector. It has en observed that "Innovation is an important aspect of many kinds of human activities. The use of highly advanced technology by the less developed countries generates the need not only of skilled manpower, but also of managerial talent." In energy PR the talent management is an important phenomenon. It has been observed that"High performance will lead to high satisfaction. Merit promotion for outstanding work is provided in most organizations, although the applicability is highly restrictive."

On this background in order to improve performance of energy PR this research work has been undertaken. In this work following hypotheses have been drawn.

- The energy problem in Maharashtra has become more acute due to lack of planning. Proper utilization of PR resources can help to overcome the crisis.
- Right PR planning can help to overcome energy crisis in the state. Communication strategy must be developed to resolve the crisis.
- Energy communication can help to develop and strengthen sustainable development processes both resource saving and energy saving can be a boon.
- New public relation model is required to overcome the problem in a right manner.

The following can be noted as major findings of this research work.

V. Major findings:

(1) Energy problems can be solved by bridging

communication gaps between the energy producers, suppliers and consumers. There is a need to overcome these problems. The promotion of energy literacy is highly required in this regard.

(2) The proper energy education is possible by making systematic, energy saving campaigns. These efforts have positively turned in favor of energy saving.

(3) Media mix strategies are required to overcome energy crisis. Energy PR efforts are based on involving, persuading and transforming public opinion in favor of energy saving. This has lead to positive change.

(4) Effective use of media has brought effective change. The energy education has not only save resources, but also it tried to enlighten people at large for energy saving regularly.

(5) Lack of planning is a major problem in energy crisis and efforts made in this regard are limited and needs to be widened. Well designed measures in using information sources can change profile of energy crisis. Short-term, midterm and long-term efforts are required to overcome the problems in energy crisis in a systematic manner.

(6) RACE strategy can help to overcome energy crises in Maharashtra. After conducting research there is a need to evolve program of action. New communication strategy must be adopted for continuous evaluation of energy saving efforts.

(7) Energy saving can lead towards sustainable development. A constant and continuous communication strategy is required to face energy crisis in Maharashtra. Saving of every unit of energy should lead to saving of resources and multiplication of productivity in Maharashtra. Saving of energy x utilization of energy = enhancement of productivity. (SE x LIE = EP)

VI. Chapter scheme:

In this research Work the following chapters have been designed in a systematic manner.

Chapter-I: The Concept

In this chapter every effort was made to correlate the research scheme with sustainable development communication. Further in this chapter firstly conceptual framework has been presented. The basic concept of energy PR has been explained. The origin and development of PRs in world and India has been briefly highlighted. Further in the context of globalization a new light is thrown on sustainable development. The background of research topic has been explained and significance, need and objectives have been illustrated. About energy crisis in Asia it has been observed that "The discussion of energy policy and its link with economic growth has been widespread in the economic literature. Developing countries that aspire to faster growth have been more interested in the role of energy in output performance than ever before. The major economies of South Asia in particular are experiencing spectacular growth on the one hand and confronting the challenges of energy expansion on the other hand." (Mandal R.K. "Globalization, sustainable rural development and common property resources" Discovery Publishers, New Delhi, 2012, article by Md. Gazi Salah Uddin and others p-78) Maharashtra is not exception to this. Hence this topic was explored from scientific grounds.

Chapter-II: Research Design:

In this chapter exploratory research design has been testified properly. The role and relevance of communication and PR research has been explained. Three stages in this design mainly survey of literature, social experience survey and insight stimulating cases have been explained one after another. This chapter has presented the systematic design. This chapter is also based on current trends in inter disciplinary research on energy, communication and management as well as public relations. Two major techniques such as social survey and content analysis have been elucidated in a relevant manner. The research strategy, sample size, questionnaire and interview techniques have also been defined here being applied in this work. The primary and secondary sources of data collection have also been explained to pin point the methodological issues.

Chapter -III: Review of literature:

In this chapter a new light on energy crisis has been thrown and report on review of literature has been presented. The available literature was classified in three categories international, national and local. Further

energy crisis is studied in two phases. In the first phase the energy problems during 1960 to 2000 has been explained. Further in the second phase the every problem from 2001 to 2010 have also be pin pointed. The entire issue has been be crystallized here. This chapter is based on current data available on website as well as data published in various annual reports and publications by MEDA, Pune. Some interesting research journals on energy have also been used here.

Chapter IV- Mass Media and Energy PR

This chapter is based on study of sources and tools of energy PR. The study of print and electronic media has been conducted for the use and application of energy saving. In this chapter content analysis of four major Marathi newspapers and Marathi news channels has been conducted and a comparative analysis of facts has been presented and inferences have been drawn. This comparative content analysis has helped to provide new approach to the problem. There is a serious need to improve the content regarding energy saving. A close critical look at the problem has helped to arrive at a correct focus. A critical study of energy saving campaigns has been presented in this chapter. Further the role of energy institutes, corporations, and NGOs as stakeholders of energy PR has been examined. Further role, functions and utility of special PR tools has also been examined.

Chapter V- The energy PR and sustainable development communication:

In this chapter field work report has been presented in a systematic manner. This survey is based on sample of 300 respondents' responses. Tables have been presented and graphs have been placed on each section. A critical analysis of facts has been presented in new angle. This has enabled to understand the issue in sustainable development communication. A critical insight has been possible due to this field work. Inferences have been drawn and problems have been sorted out after the field observations. Further in this chapter the problem has been analyzed in communication sociology perspective leading towards critical examination of facts.

Chapter VI: Energy and sustainable developments: Problems and Remedies:

In this chapter major problems in energy PR have been

synthesized and remedies have been suggested out of this one after another. All this analysis has been made in sustainable development view point. This has provided a new PR model to overcome the energy crisis in Maharashtra. Media mix approach is the essence of this chapter. Finally the economic value of the research work has been presented here. According to Srinivas Melkote "The major recommendation of most studies in development communication to overcome the comprehension constraint has been to prepare. Third World rural audiences for extension media messages by organizing literacy campaigns." (Melkote Srinivas R. Rawat Publications, Jaipur, ;1992, p-138) This chapter has been core of the entire phenomenon evolved out of serious explorations undertaken after this final work. This is core of the entire study.

Chapter VII: Conclusion:

In this chapter at one side chapter summary has been presented and major findings have been drawn on the other side. A new theoretical framework has been presented and finally new areas of research have been suggested. The major contribution of this work has been discussed at the end.

New theory:

- Energy PR is a neglected area and requires serious thought.
- The success of energy PR depends on public acceptance.
- A new network of media relations is required to develop new strategy for energy saving in a sustainable manner.
- The saving of energy can lead toaccelerate sustainable development communication, which will improve the economic value of state, institute or a family.
- The energy PR can generate wealth, can save resources and can help the people and nation for economic growth.

Uma Narula has observed that "Development communication is described as the systematic use of communication in support of

national development." (Narula Uma "Development Communication" Har Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1994, p19) This is true even for regional and rural development. Participation of people is a key factor. Melkote observed that "Participatory approaches hold great promise for more equitable and relevant development, the idea of participatory development is still only an approach. We do not yet have a full blown theory of participation." (Melkote S.R., op cit., pp-27071)Such a model is required for energy saving. The RACE model must be added with two more words P and T. lVLed Betterly Lee's model must be supported with two more points' participation and transformation. Anna Hajare in his village Ralegaon Siddhi has proved both participation and transformation. Sanjiv Unhale's "Three village, Kachhi Ghati, Mahal Pimpri and Pirwadi" have proved energy saving by using educative means for improving energy literacy.

PR energy education is a part of sustainable development education. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a relatively new evolving concept. At its core, ESD promotes the idea of sustainable development by integrating environment, social and economic imperatives into education for a better quality life in the present as well as the future. Education for promoting energy literacy is also a part of sustainable development communication. Energy education is key of the sustainability of resources.

Thus, this research work has established the proper PR support will lead towards the saving of energy and it can accelerate sustainable development communication. There is a need to develop a new positive approach to look at the complex problem.

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